



EDITORIAL

Is this issue worth reading?

¿Vale la pena leer este número?

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The advantages of interdisciplinary approaches to health care over multidisciplinary approaches are well documented.¹ A multidisciplinary approach may not even involve a case conference with the chance of patient management being fragmented and less successful. For the patient the possibility of receiving a conflicting (or apparently conflicting diagnosis) and/or contradictory advice and/or confusing recommendations can be avoided with access to interdisciplinary diagnosis and treatment. Interdisciplinary collaborative practice enables coordinated and coherent patient management to be delivered.² Interprofessional approaches are often involved in interdisciplinary teams and a wider range of knowledge and experience becomes available.

There are similar advantages from being able to read journals which have contributions that have interdisciplinary and/or interprofessional and/or interinstitutional origins. For example, while undergraduate teaching at different institutions may have many similarities there will usually be very significant differences in the strengths of experience and knowledge in particular areas of research at different institutions.

An exceptional graduate degree thesis can be used to attract significant funding to further study the related area of research. Funding allows for a specialised laboratory to be established and for graduate degree students to be enrolled and guided to study in and add to that field of knowledge. Further success and experience help

to perpetuate the growth of knowledge in what is likely to be a fairly narrow field, which may not even be significantly represented in the research conducted at other institutions. However, the institution involved in that narrow field can become a knowledge and experience base for the international community through related publications.

History shows that research conducted while on sabbatical allows for interdisciplinary, interinstitutional and often interprofessional experience to be gained and has a record of being extremely beneficial to participants as well as the institutions they visit.³ However, a journal such as the Journal of Optometry provides similar benefits. International journals such as the Journal of Optometry attract contributions from a wide variety of sources. For example, in this issue the nine articles involve 27 authors from at least 15 different institutions. Readers have the opportunity to benefit from access to this wide range of sources of experience and new knowledge.

References

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